



PRESS RELEASE
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For Immediate Release

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**ARMED ROBBER SENTENCED TO
MORE THAN 66 YEARS IN FEDERAL PRISON**

ORLANDO - U.S. District Judge Anne C. Conway today sentenced a Palm Bay man, **YOSVANY JESUS CASTRO**, age 19, to a term of imprisonment of 66 years and 2 months for the armed robberies of three Brevard County convenience stores in January 2003. Castro previously had been convicted of 3 counts of interference with commerce by robbery and 3 counts of carrying a firearm in relation to a crime of violence after a December 2003 jury trial in federal court. In addition to this prison sentence, Castro must serve 5 years in a supervised release program, perform 150 hours of community service, pay a \$600 special assessment and make full restitution to the victims of the robbery.

According to the evidence presented at the trial, Castro and his 25 year old co-defendant, Antale Lavar Williams, robbed 3 Brevard County convenience stores between January 5-7, 2003. The stores are located in Palm Bay, Titusville and Mims, Florida and are owned by the 7-11 Corporation and The Pantry, Inc. During the robbery spree, Castro used a semi-automatic pistol to threaten customers and store clerks while Williams physically assaulted store employees. The combined robberies netted the pair a total of just over \$300.

The case represents the culmination of a cooperative effort between the United States Attorney's Office, the State Attorney's Office for Brevard/Seminole Counties, the Titusville Police Department, the Brevard County Sheriff's Office, the Orange County Sheriff's Office, the Palm Bay Police Department, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives ("ATF"). This is another case prosecuted as a part the Department of Justice program "Project Safe Neighborhoods" - a nationwide gun violence reduction initiative with strong support from the ATF. United States Attorney Paul I. Perez is coordinating the cooperative effort here in the Middle District of Florida with federal, state and local law enforcement officials, calling our effort "Project Safe Neighborhoods - Operation HALT the Violence!" The objective is to reduce violent crime by locating and seizing unlawfully possessed guns and then swiftly prosecuting the offenders using both federal and state gun laws.

Williams remains in custody awaiting sentencing on April 7, 2004 on the same charges. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Robert E. Bodnar, Jr. and Special Assistant United States Attorney Gregory J. Konieczka.